

MANCHESTER ESSEX REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Student Activities



Manchester Essex Regional High School (MERHS) offers a vibrant assortment of clubs, groups, organizations and extra-curricular activities.

ANIME CLUB

The Anime Club provides a safe environment for students in grades 8 through 12 to engage socially as well as freely express their ideas. Members share a strong interest in Japanese culture and entertainment, participating in activities such as viewing Japanese films and anime; learning calligraphy; origami and other Japanese crafts; and exploring the language, art, and music of Japan.

Advisor: Shannon Doherty, Academic Learning Center

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

MERHS offers a High School Concert Band, High School Pep Band, and High School Jazz Band. The High School Concert Band meets during the school day and there are options to take it every day or on every odd day of the rotation. The High School Jazz Band rehearses during the evening. Members of the High School Concert Band are required to perform in the High School Pep Band, performing at school rallies and home football games. Required performances of the High School Concert Band include Winter and Spring Concerts, Veteran's Day assembly, Memorial Day assembly and parade, the Manchester Tree Lighting, and the "Council on Aging" luncheon. The High School Jazz Band performs at the Winter and Spring Concerts as well as the annual Evening of Jazz Concert. It is expected that members of the High School Jazz Band participate in the High School Concert Band, and all students will be encouraged to audition for district festivals. A performance trip is planned for the High School Band every other year.

Director: Joseph Janack, Music

CHORUS

MERHS offers a High School Chorus to interested students in grade 9-12. The Full Chorus meets during the school days, and it is offered at both College Prep and Honors levels. New and experienced singers work together to learn proper vocal techniques, sight-singing, and ensemble skills. Students learn to perform a variety of musical styles and genres that include standard choral works, spirituals, and musical theater selections. Most music is arranged in four-part harmony for soprano, alto, alto two/tenor, and bass. Required performances include the annual winter and spring concerts, town tree lighting ceremonies, the high school awards ceremony, and school assemblies. Advanced students are encouraged to audition for the high school's a cappella group, the SoundWaves, as well as the Northeast Senior District Festival in the fall and All-State competition in the winter.

Advisor: Donna O'Neill, Music

SOUNDWAVES

The SoundWaves is MERHS' select A Cappella group. It is offered as an Honors- level course, and it meets twice a week after school hours. The group is comprised of ten to sixteen students who perform at numerous on- and off-campus events throughout the school year. New students must audition and all students must be enrolled in Full Chorus. The SoundWaves perform various styles of music, including arrangements of contemporary songs, pop, jazz, folk tunes, madrigals, patriotic songs and holiday music.

Advisor: Donna O'Neill, Music

DEBATE

The MERHS Debate Team participates in more than two dozen interscholastic tournaments throughout the school year and has consistently qualified to represent New England at two of the three national post-season competitions. Students participate by meeting once a week during the school day and traveling to compete. MERHS was recently recognized as one of the nation's "Top 100 Schools" in Speech and Debate by the National Forensic League.

Advisor: Yvonne Robbins, Debate

MATH TEAM

The Math Team is open to students in grades 9-12. The Team competes monthly against students from other schools in the field of mathematics as part of the Massachusetts Mathematics League.

Advisor: Daniel Lundergan, Math (Chair)

DECA

DECA is open to students 9 through 12. Students will learn about marketing, management, and entrepreneurship in business, finance, hospitality, marketing, sales, and services. DECA prepares students to solve problems, communicate effectively, lead, create, and develop teamwork skills while preparing them to enter college and the professional world. Students of the Business Course Curriculums will automatically become active members in DECA. Every honors-level student competes in the DECA District, attempting to qualify for State and International Competitions. While the competitions may be challenging, it offers students an enjoyable experience in the business environment while meeting people from around the world and creating amazing memories.

Advisor: Dean Martino, Mathematics and Business

GAY STRAIGHT ALLIANCE (GSA)

GSA is a student-run club that brings together LGBTQ+ and straight students to support each other, provide a safe place to socialize, and create a platform to fight for racial, gender, LGBTQ+, and economic justice. We focus on empowering students to educate their schools and communities, advocate for just policies that protect LGBTQ+ youth from harassment and violence, and organize in coalition with other youth groups across identity lines to address broader issues of oppression. Our work focuses on leadership development and activism that prioritizes building alliances not only across sexual orientation and gender identity lines, but also across race, ethnicity, and class lines. GSA helps provide opportunities to advocate, organize, and mobilize an intersectional movement for safer schools and healthier communities.

Advisors: Kara Brown, Mathematics

Joshua Wladkowski, Science

DRAMA

MERHS participates in the Boston Globe Drama Festival sponsored and judged by the Massachusetts High School Drama Guild. All students in grades 9 through 12 are eligible to participate and perform.

Advisor: Sirkka Natti, Memorial School General Music/Chorus Teacher

YEARBOOK

The MERHS yearbook is an annual publication put together by students on the yearbook staff. Each year, senior editors are appointed along with other special section editors. Students work with the yearbook advisor from September to late winter when the final copy goes to production. Annual yearbooks are presented to the graduating class in June.

Advisor: Caroline Epp, Art

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAVEL

The Foreign Language department sponsors trips for high school students to French and Spanish speaking countries when international travel is possible and advisable. Examples of previous trips for Spanish students of MERHS include Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru, and Spain. French students of MERHS have previously traveled to France as well as participated in visits to Québec City, where some stayed with French-speaking Canadian families. The goal of the department is to offer students an opportunity to use the target languages in authentic situations and settings, which will ultimately strengthen their knowledge and usage of the language. International travel also broadens students perspective about different cultures and teach them how to be more attentive world citizens.

Advisor: Michelle Magana, World Languages (Chair)

GREEN TEAM

The Green Team is a diverse group of staff members and students from MERHS who are hoping to fuel the green revolution. The group is not exclusive, and all who maintain a passion for the environment are welcomed. Members work on particular assignments of special interest so they can bring new information or news to the entire group. The Manchester Essex Regional School District is our primary focus, but the entirety of the two towns will be affected. Green Team strives to create an environmentally friendly area within the school building with a passion for all things natural. The goal is to postpone and/or weaken the effects of global warming on the future. Recent initiatives include "single stream recycling" (all recyclable items into one bin), promoting re-usable water bottles, conserving energy, fresher and cleaner water, and so much more!

Advisor: Keith Gray, Green Team

NATIONAL ART HONOR SOCIETY (NAHS)

The NAHS program is for students in grades 10-12, for the purpose of inspiring and recognizing individuals showing an outstanding ability in art. Students are invited for membership in NAHS based on their interest in working on art-related projects as a group. The NAHS also strives to aid members in working toward the attainment of their highest potential in artistic works, and to bring art education to the attention of the school and community. Members are expected to attend all meetings and complete five hours of community service.

Advisor: Tamera Burns, Art

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY (NHS)

Eligibility is based on students' grade point average at the second semester of either sophomore or junior year, which has to be at minimum overall of 4.35. Membership is based on character, leadership, academic excellence and community service. Members must display honesty and integrity daily in their school and community. As a member of NHS, a student is required to complete five hours of community service each quarter, including one group effort each semester. Some examples of community service include collecting candy after Halloween for Operation Gratitude soldiers, tutoring middle school and high school students, and canned-good drives. The 4.35 grade point average must be maintained throughout the school years that members are participating in NHS or otherwise will be put on academic probation and could lead to a termination in membership. All chapter meetings must be attended promptly by all members, which occur at the second Tuesday of every month (unless otherwise noted). Failure to comply with these policies will lead to consequences determined by NHS officers and advisors.

Advisor: Jennifer Coleman, Social Studies

PEER MENTORS

Peer Mentors may be nominated by a teacher or staff member, or may complete an application at any point during the school year. Members should consider if they are socially active, willing to help their peers, and advocates for changes and improvement in the school community. The main focus of the Peer Mentors is to provide a strong and supportive peer-to-peer network of support along topics such as academic integrity, cyber-bullying, self-esteem, time management, study skills, stress reduction, and emotional and physical wellness. Peer Mentors assist with planning and coordinating school-based programs such as Freshman Orientation, information panels, health and wellness related activities. Members of the Peer Mentor demonstrate the school's positive academic and social environment.

Advisors: Beverly Low, Director of Guidance and College Counseling

David Conwell, Counselor

Gillian Polk, Counselor

ROBOTICS

The MERHS robotics team participates in the FIRST Robotics competition. The club meets after school with mentors from the community who are skilled in the various aspects of robot design and construction. During the fall season, club members participate in a warm up competition sponsored by VEX Robotics. The winter months are the most active and intense regarding meeting times and frequency; the robot building occurs during this season and students have a variety of opportunities to participate in the different jobs/tasks associated with completing the robot and preparing it for competition.

Advisor: Paul Pennoyer, Middle School Science

SCIENCE LEAGUE

The team's purpose is to prepare for a monthly competition in the field of science with other schools from all over the North Shore. Preparation days are on Tuesdays, while competition days are on the second Tuesday of every month. Team members will ride on a bus provided by the school to the competition with the advisor at 2:45pm, arriving back at the school around 6:00pm. Schools compete against each other in three scientific events involving building, invention, engineering, lab techniques, and application of knowledge. All areas of science are included in the monthly events. Team members will be divided up into teams of four between the events. There are eight total competitions throughout the school year. Students are encouraged to attend the events that they find most interesting, so monthly attendance is not required.

Advisor: Kristin Umile, Science (Chair)

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council is a group of student leaders from all four grades who meet monthly; the council is led by a senior President and representatives from each class. Students discuss issues and concerns and work toward making suggestions that can be tested and implemented to improve the quality of student life. Student Council provides community service opportunities to MERHS students and promotes school spirit.

Advisor: Abigail Donnelly, Social Studies

JOURNALISM

The journalism class, an honors level elective for students in grades 10 through 12, meets on Monday nights. The purpose of the class is to produce the school newspaper, *The Independent*; therefore, interested students must be strong writers who pay close attention to English conventions and are able to work independently and meet deadlines. Prerequisite: A final grade of "B" or above in English the previous year and a completed application, including a recommendation from the student's current English teacher.

Advisor: Mary Buckley-Harmon, English